How to Identify Skin Cancer Early: Warning Signs & Screening

Guide by a trusted Dermatologist in Dubai

Skin cancer is one of the most common cancers worldwide, and early detection significantly improves treatment outcomes. With Dubai's strong sunlight and high UV exposure throughout the year, understanding the early signs of skin cancer is essential. If you notice any changes in your skin, consulting a **Dermatologist in Dubai** can help you identify risks early and begin appropriate treatment.

This blog explains the early warning signs of skin cancer, screening methods, and when to seek medical attention.

What Is Skin Cancer?

Skin cancer develops when abnormal skin cells grow uncontrollably, often due to DNA damage caused by ultraviolet (UV) radiation. The most common types include:

- Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC)
- Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC)
- Melanoma (the most serious form)

Skin cancer can start as small, harmless-looking spots. Recognizing them early is crucial.

Early Warning Signs of Skin Cancer

1. The ABCDE Rule of Melanoma

Dermatologists use this rule to identify suspicious moles:

A – Asymmetry
One half of the mole does not match the other.

B – Border
Edges are irregular, blurred, or uneven.

C – Color
Multiple colors such as black, brown, red, or white.

D – Diameter
Larger than 6mm. However, smaller lesions can also be dangerous.

E – Evolving
Any change in size, shape, color, or sensation (itching or bleeding).

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2. Signs of Non-Melanoma Skin Cancer

Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC)

- Shiny or pearly bump
- Pink growth with rolled edges
- A sore that does not heal

Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC)

- Firm, red bump
- Rough or scaly patch
- A sore that bleeds or crusts

These types usually appear on sun-exposed areas such as the face, scalp, ears, and arms.

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3. New or Changing Skin Spots

A new spot or mole that looks different from others should be checked by a dermatologist.

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4. Itching, Pain, or Bleeding Without Reason

Skin cancer lesions may itch, hurt, or bleed even if there is no injury.

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5. Wound That Does Not Heal

A wound that remains open for more than three to four weeks may indicate skin cancer.

Who Is at Higher Risk for Skin Cancer?

Risk increases if you have:

- Fair or sensitive skin
- A family history of skin cancer
- Excessive sun exposure
- History of tanning bed use
- A large number of moles
- A weakened immune system

People living in sunny regions like the UAE face additional UV exposure, making regular screenings important.

Skin Cancer Screening: What to Expect

A **Dermatologist in Dubai** typically performs the following:

1. Full Skin Examination

A detailed visual inspection of the entire skin surface.

2. Dermatoscopy

A handheld device used to examine suspicious lesions more closely.

3. Skin Biopsy (If Needed)

A small sample of skin is tested to confirm diagnosis.

Screenings are simple, painless, and can detect cancer in its earliest stage.

When to See a Dermatologist

Visit a dermatologist if you notice:

- A new or unusual mole
- Any mole that is changing
- Persistent itching or bleeding

- A spot that looks different from others
- A wound that does not heal

Regular yearly skin check-ups are recommended, especially for people in the UAE.

How to Reduce Your Skin Cancer Risk

Taking preventive measures can significantly protect your skin:

- Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher)
- Avoid sun exposure during peak hours
- Wear protective clothing and UV-blocking sunglasses
- Avoid tanning beds
- Perform regular self-checks

Conclusion

Skin cancer is highly treatable when detected early. Being aware of the warning signs and attending regular screenings can make a significant difference. If you notice any changes or require a skin assessment, an experienced **Dermatologist in Dubai** can provide accurate diagnosis and timely care.